

Document No. 7

No Change in Class.

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Class. Changed To: Ts S C

Auth.: HR 70-2

Date: 20-7-78 By: 35

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Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Projects Review Committee ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

FROM : Assistant Director for Operations

SUBJECT: Enlargement of FDD's Table of Organization to Meet  
the Demands of CIA Offices for Classified Translation

DATE: DEC 5 1950

1. While Foreign Documents Division does not function under an NSCID, it is nevertheless charged by CIA Directive with the exploitation of current foreign language press and periodicals for the Intelligence Advisory Committee members. With its present Table of Organization it can cover only the most important matter from these sources.

2. It is proposed that the Table of Organization for Foreign Documents Division be increased for accomplishing the translation of classified foreign language documents.

3. Necessity for the Project

a. General Necessity

CIA offices have stated that they have or will have during the next twelve months approximately 98,764 pages of classified foreign language material which must be translated in order for them to fulfill their missions. Of this volume 68% is required by OSO, 19% by ORR, 5% by OCD and 4% each by OSI and OPC. FDD has at present a maximum capacity to translate 20,000 pages per year even at the cost of sacrificing some effort in the exploitation of current foreign publications for the IAC, which is FDD's major function.

b. Advantages of centralizing linguists in FDD

1. It was suggested by OSO at a Projects Review Committee hearing, Friday, 24 November 1950, that it might be desirable for them to recruit their own linguists for their translation service. This suggestion has been made by other offices but it is believed evident that such a solution is less efficient than concentration on a centralization of linguists in FDD.

2. General: FDD has developed efficient techniques for the processing of foreign language documents and has in one unit combined assets for such operations not easily duplicated elsewhere. Good linguists capable of full security clearance are difficult to recruit and any competition in the field results in a detriment to CIA.

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3. Value of Mutual Support: FDD's force of highly qualified linguists offers mutual support in linguistic problems including knowledge of dialects, classical or literary allusions, local customs and the ability to read foreign script in difficult handwriting.

4. Avoidance of Duplication: Only through a centralization in FDD can duplication be eliminated. Experience has shown frequent requests from more than one office for translation of the same material; requests for translation of material already processed by FDD; and translation requests for material duplicating in substance but inferior to that already processed or for which better sources are known to FDD.

5. Reference Materials: A collection of linguistic reference materials has been carefully made by FDD over four years of operations. Some of these are rare and no other copies are known to be in the U.S. Files of modern slang expressions, abbreviations and local idioms are kept by FDD keeping pace with the changes modern languages are now undergoing.

6. Common Service: Of the classified material requiring translation a substantial amount is of interest to more than one office. FDD is organized administratively and operationally to meet the needs of coordination for common interest. For another office to provide such a common service would require additional administrative personnel as well as linguists.

7. Morale: It has been suggested that linguists recruited by other offices in part time operational desk work be more permanent due to the accompanying relief from tedious translation. FDD's experience is that a good linguist is generally a scholar whose first choice is research rather than strict translation; hence the established procedure in FDD is to divide the work between exploitation and translation. The exploitation function offers equal or better opportunity for holding the interest of the linguist.

8. Training: FDD trains linguists as intelligence officers and expands the number of their languages. Facility in many rare languages has been developed by FDD personnel and those languages most difficult to recruit can often be covered by such training and expansion.

9. Flexibility: Experience has shown that the volume of translation needed in any one language is spasmodic over a period of time. The flow is never even due to communications and changes in the capacity of the producing source. Through the training and the exploitation programs mentioned above, FDD maintains the flexibility necessary to focus the effort toward the current need at any time.

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4. Personnel

One linguist can translate averagely one thousand pages per year counting sick and annual leave. The volume of classified translation is estimated at 98,764 pages as previously shown. FDD is now processing 20,000 pages per year. Of the balance it is estimated that about eight thousand pages may be absorbed by summarization and the elimination of worthless material.

FDD will then need [redacted] additional linguists.

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[redacted] clerical personnel will be needed for their support.

No supervisory personnel will be necessary due to the existing organization in FDD.

Experience has shown that Grade 7 is the minimum for reliability and accuracy.

5. Space

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A minimum of 4000 feet will be needed. If FDD can re-acquire the space since given to "Communications" in [redacted] Building it will provide ample housing for the added personnel. If this cannot be arranged and no other adjacent space can be made available, FDD can go on a seven day week with staggered leave days thus making present space adequate for the additional personnel.

6. Time Required

This project is for an indefinite period.

7. Type of Funds

Voucherized funds would be required.

8. Cost

GS-9  
GS-7  
GS-4  
GS-3

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GEORGE G. CAREY

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